REGISTRY UPDATE

EPA United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

The *Standard Update* newsletter has changed its name to the *Registry Update* to better represent the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Environmental Information's metadata management efforts. Data standards activities will continue to be featured, and will continue to serve as the foundation to many metadata registry activities. In this issue of the *Registry Update*, read about EPA's new System of Registries (SoR).

EPA Opens its Gateway to Multiple Registries

EPA's Office of Environmental Information (OEI) recently released the new System of Registries (SoR) at www.epa.gov/sor/. The SoR is a virtual gateway for accessing several of EPA's existing registries, such as the Environmental Data Registry (EDR) and the Substance Registry System (SRS). The SoR is a critical link in EPA's information architecture and is a vital component to the National Environmental Information Exchange Network (Exchange Network). Specifically, the SoR was developed to support the Agency's data standards program and numerous Agency information technology activities including the Agency architecture, standard eXtensible Markup Language (XML) tag development, and data exchange with stakeholders through network nodes.

The release of the SoR underscores that the Agency values its information resources as a strategic asset.

System of Registries Components

The registries provide identification information for objects that the Agency uses in its core business processes and is also of interest to Network trading partners and the public.

OEI's System of Registries

These objects consist of:

- Data standards, XML, and application metadata in the Environmental Data Registry (EDR).
- Facility identification information in the Facility Registry System (FRS).
- EPA's application inventory, organization hierarchy, and other information resources in the Information Resource Registry System (IRRS).
- Chemicals, biological organisms, and miscellaneous substances in the Substance Registry System (SRS).

- Data sets, models, and spatial data in the [Environmental Information Management System](#) (EIMS).
- Environmental terms and definitions in the [Terminology Reference System](#) (TRS).

In addition to providing links and brief descriptions of the related registry applications, the SoR provides searches across the registries—a Quick Search on the home page and a more extensive set of queries on the [Search](#) page. The searches in SoR direct users to the registry that is pertinent to their needs. The searches take users to one of the applicable SoR registries where query results are displayed. Additional searches are available on each application's Search page.

The Fruition of a 10-Year Vision

The SoR is the result of a strategic vision that began over 10 years ago. Although the term *metadata* may be familiar now, few Agencies realized its value 10 years ago. Initially conceptualized in 1993 in response to *EPA's IRM Strategic Plan for 1991-1995*, the creation of the SoR was one of many goals the Office of Information Resources Management set out to accomplish. "This centralized data repository will be the means by which the Agency will store, organize, and share data resources." Even 10 years ago, it was envisioned that the data element registry would provide a "substantial foundation from which the Agency can analyze, model, and construct an Agency information architecture."

Change Your Bookmarks!

Users familiar with the [Chemical Registry System](#) (CRS) and [Biology Registry System](#) (BioRS) take note–these two registries will be replaced by the Substance Registry System (SRS) at www.epa.gov/srs/.

The SRS is an aggregation of the chemical identification data from the CRS, the biological taxonomy information from the BioRS, and other physical and other analytical parameters (pH, color, etc.) used in environmental reporting. Whereas the CRS and BioRS provide a scientific discipline perspective to Agency information, the SRS lets a user look across disciplines at the variety of substances identified in environmental regulations. It also provides users with the ability to access all substances regulated by a particular environmental regulation.

The change will likely take place in January 2003, but since the SRS already integrates all the functionality and data in CRS and BioRS, you can use SRS to access chemical and biological information anytime.

Sixth International Open Forum on Metadata Registries
January 20-24, 2003
Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

You are invited to participate in the sixth international Open Forum on Metadata Registries. Please see www.metadata-standards.org/OpenForum2003/ for more information.